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OUR monthly summary of country news affords sufficient proof that sacred music has now so thoroughly taken root in the hearts of the clergy that a service performed in a slovenly manner has become a rare exception. Depending, however, for our information in this department of our Journal solely upon country newspapers and correspondents, it becomes a real pleasure to confirm, from our own experience, the truth of these statements, whenever it lies in our power. The village church of Herne is just an agreeable stroll from the Bay; and being so picturesquely situated amongst the trees, many visitors are attracted on Sundays to this rural place of worship, where they are certain not only to hear an excellent sermon, but to have the musical portion of the service performed in so thoroughly satisfactory a manner as to add materially to the devotional feeling of the congregation. Historically, too, this church is full of interest, as being the place where the Martyr Ridley preached, and the first church where the *Te Deum* was chanted in the English language. Considering that the little choir of this church consists solely of the villagers around; and that they are entirely trained by their curate, the Rev. J. R. Buchanan, without even the usual aid of an organ, no little amount of credit is due to their teacher for bringing them to their present state of efficiency. On the morning of our visit we were quite struck by the manner in which the responses were sung; and three hymns were also given with a steadiness very often not obtained in choirs of far greater pretension. On Thursday the 24th ult., a little Choral Festival was given, with the laudable object of assisting to raise funds for the erection of National Schools. The sermon was preached by the Rev. J. M. Nisbet, M.A. Vicar of Ramsgate; and the usual choir was strongly reinforced by many kind volunteers. Tallis's anthem, "All people that on earth do dwell," was exceedingly well sung; and the hymns, especially the 17th, after the sermon, were all highly creditable specimens of what simple church singing should be, the boys especially exhibiting an earnestness which showed how excellent had been the training—moral as well as musical—to which they had been subjected. The prayers were intoned by the Rev. J. R. Buchanan, and the Rev. H. Whish, Curate of Birchington. Mr. Edwin Barnes, organist of Holy Trinity Church, Paddington, who happened to be a visitor at Herne Bay, kindly undertook to preside at the harmonium on the occasion.

THE arrangements for the Gloucester Musical Festival are now completed. The dates of the performances are fixed for the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th inst., and the vocalists engaged are Madlle. Titiens, Madame Rudersdorff, Miss Louisa Pyne, Miss Julia Elton, Miss E. Wilkinson, Dr. Gunz, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Lewis Thomas, and Mr. Santley. Madame Arabella Goddard is to be the solo pianiste, and Mr. Blagrove the solo violinist. Dr. Wesley will be the conductor. Mr. Townshend Smith will preside at the organ, and Mr. Done at the pianoforte. The orchestra, on this occasion, will be placed at the west end of the cathedral, and a new organ built for the situation by Mr. Willis. The first afternoon performance on Tuesday, after divine service, will consist of the first part of *St. Paul*, and Spohr's *Last Judgment*; on Wednesday a selection from Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* and Mozart's *Requiem*; on Thursday, *Elijah*; and on Friday the *Messiah*. There will be also miscellaneous concerts at the Shire Hall on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings. It is impossible to imagine a more judicious selection of music than has been made on this occasion; and with an orchestra containing the first names in the kingdom, and the united choirs of Gloucester, Hereford, Worcester, and Bristol, there is every reason to suppose that this Festival will prove one of the very best that has yet taken place.

AN excellent Concert was given at St. Paul's Schools, Westminster Road, on Wednesday, the 9th ult., in aid of the School Excursion. The vocalists were Misses Harrison, Hamlin, Widdicombe, Stokes, and Godfrey; Messrs. Hulford, Tunstall, Williams, Hamp, and Emmerson; and a choir of 30 voices. Pianist, Mr. Hinchliff. Conductor, Mr. W. Reeves, deputy organist.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**** Notices of concerts and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence; otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance. All communications must be authenticated by the proper name and address of the writer.**

Our Correspondents will greatly oblige by writing all names as clearly as possible, as we cannot be responsible for any mistakes which may occur.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

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The paper will be discontinued where the Subscription is not renewed.

We again remind those who are disappointed in obtaining back numbers, that although the music pages are always stereotyped, only a sufficient quantity of the rest of the paper is printed to supply the current sale.

Brief Summary of Country News.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this Summary; as all the notices are either collated from the local papers, or supplied to us by occasional correspondents.

BEVERLEY (YORKSHIRE).—A grand Concert was given on Tuesday evening, the 8th ult., in aid of the funds for the restoration of St. Mary's Church. The performers (who gave their services gratuitously) were chiefly gentlemen from the University of Oxford. Selections were given from some of the most eminent composers, the performers proving themselves competent musicians and vocalists.

CORNWALL.—During the stay of the Royal party at St. Michael's Mount, Mr. J. H. Nunn, Professor of Music, Penzance, at the request of Mr. St. Aubyn, M.P., performed on the organ at St. Michael's Mount, in the presence of the Princess of Wales. After listening some time, her Royal Highness wished to examine the instrument, and desired Mr. Nunn to play several pieces. In order that the effect of the organ might be heard on the terrace adjoining the Chapel, the Hallelujah Chorus was performed. Before leaving, the Princess expressed herself very much pleased.

FALMOUTH.—The Union of Church Choirs of the western district for the advancement of the use of "Plain Song" at Divine Service, took place on Thursday, the 24th ult., at Falmouth Church, on the occasion of the Parochial Annual Harvest Festival. The vocal arrangements were under the direction of Messrs. Shaw and Sedding. Miss Bertha Duckham, the youthful organist, displayed her accustomed ability and taste in the organ accompaniments.

HUNMANBY.—Miss Maria Wilson, of St. Stephen's choir, Hull, and Messrs. Plowman, Hird, Hudson, Holmes, and Turner, of York, gave one of their pleasing concerts at this place on the 11th ult.

LEEDS.—There can now be little doubt that the Town Hall Organ here is unsurpassed in Europe. Lately a valuable addition was made to the instrument in the shape of extra stops enclosed within the swell-box, for the purpose of producing effects which previously could not be obtained. The echo organ, which is as yet very rare, was the origin of the "swell," without which an organ is now considered very incomplete. The idea of producing an echo first suggested the placing of pipes within a box; and when this was effected, it occurred to Abraham Jordan, in the year 1712, that the front of the box might be opened at pleasure, to produce a swelling sound in imitation of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* passages. This is now obtained in the most perfect manner by an arrangement similar to the action of a Venetian blind. The echo organ is enclosed in this swell-box. Dr. Spark has lately given some masterly performances in the Town Hall, in which the echo organ was displayed in the most effective manner. His perfect command of the instrument, his aptitude for writing pieces specially to "bring out" the peculiarities and beauties of the Leeds organ, and his musicianly taste in arranging programmes, combine to make his concerts thoroughly enjoyable. Every performance has been attended by large and attentive audiences.

MONKLAND.—Another restored and beautified church in the Diocese of Hereford was re-opened on the 1st ult. The church at Monkland, a village about three miles from Leominster, after being in a ruinous condition for many years, has, by the energy and perseverance of the vicar, the Rev. Sir Henry Baker, assisted by his parishioners and other friends, been successfully restored in a degree far exceeding its pristine state. Before the work of restoration was commenced, the edifice was in a most dilapidated condition; and a large sum was required to complete the very extensive alterations which all who were interested in the undertaking considered absolutely necessary. The good work was however commenced by Sir Henry Baker freely giving the sum of £500, being his share of the proceeds of the sale of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*—a book of which he was one of the compilers, and of which about a million and a quarter copies have been sold—the parishioners then granted £250 upon the parish rate, the Diocesan Church Building Society contributed £40, and the rest of the outlay, which cannot amount to less than £1,000, has been defrayed by subscriptions, raised solely by the exertions of the vicar, who made himself answerable for any deficiency that might occur. Besides the very important alterations and restorations which have been so successfully carried out, the chancel and nave have been entirely rebuilt. The east window, which is the gift of the vicar's co-compilers of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, is executed by Messrs. Hardman, of Birmingham. The subject is "The Glorification of the Lord;" and it is universally considered to be one of their very best specimens of glass painting. For the re-opening services a temporary organ was fixed; but the permanent instrument will be manufactured by Messrs. Walker, of Tottenham Court Road, London. It will cost £250, and is the gift of the vicar. The dedication festival was commenced by a procession of the choir and clergy, in their surplices, singing a processional hymn. The prayers were intoned by the Rev. Mr. Huntingtower, of Littlemoor. The singers were the members of the village choir. The whole of the service was Gregorian; and the music was exceedingly well sung. The anthem was "From the rising of the Sun," by Sir F. Osuley; and the talented composer must have been greatly delighted by the way in which his music was interpreted by the little choir of Monkland. Mr. W. H. Monk, of King's College, London, and editor of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, presided at the temporary organ with his usual ability. At the conclusion of the service, the clergy, visitors, and parishioners proceeded to a marquee in a field near the church, where a splendid luncheon was provided by the Rev. Sir Henry Baker, who occupied the chair. At the evening service the prayers were intoned by the Rev. Sir Frederick G.

Ouseley, and the anthem was "Praise the Lord, O my soul." We cannot conclude without congratulating the inhabitants of Monkland upon possessing one of the most beautiful restored churches in the kingdom; and the Rev. Sir Henry Baker, and all who have aided him in the undertaking, upon this most successful termination to their praiseworthy exertions.

MORPETH.—At St. James's Church, on the 25th July, the feast of the Patron Saint, St. James, was celebrated with its usual accompaniment of festal services and school treat. The church was very tastefully decorated with flowers by the principal ladies of the town. All the services were fully choral, the organ accompaniment being played by Mr. John Brewis. Matins were sung by the Rev. J. E. Field; and the hymn before the service, "Who are these like stars appearing?" was given, to one of the finest of the old Gregorian melodies. The hymn for Apostles' days "Let all on earth with songs rejoice," was sung for the anthem. Matins were followed by a choral celebration of the Blessed Sacrament; and the whole of the impressive service was extremely well rendered by the choir.—On the 27th July the Annual Musical Festival of the parochial choirs of the Diocese of Durham was held in St. James's Church. The service was commenced by singing the hymn commencing, "Praise, my soul, the king of heaven," to a Gregorian melody. In the evening service the prayers were intoned by the Rev. W. H. Bliss, and the responses were sung to the well-known service of Tallis. The anthem was "I know that the Lord is great," by the Rev. Sir F. A. G. Ouseley, a work which, containing no passages of extreme difficulty, was admirably suited for the occasion. Making allowance for some little unsteadiness, and for the want of due attention to the *pianos* and *fortes*—faults which may be easily overlooked, considering that the 600 voices came together for the first time that morning for rehearsal—the music was on the whole exceedingly well executed, a result mainly attributable to the excellent conducting of Mr. Clarke Dawson. Mr. Brewis must also be congratulated for his admirable performance on the organ.

PAARL (CAPE OF GOOD HOPE).—The first public performance of the Philharmonic Society here took place on the 21st June, in the Rev.—Kolben's Chapel, when the Oratorio *Christ's Advent*, a composition by Mr. John Stephen de Villiers, the conductor of the society, was given for the first time, with a chorus of nearly 100 voices. The overture was played on the harmonium, and the accompaniments to the vocal parts on the pianoforte by the composer; the Paarl not being in a condition to get up an effective orchestra. Considering that Mr. De Villiers—a musician of colonial birth—has never had the opportunity of obtaining so thoroughly an artistic education as may be procured in Europe, this Oratorio reflects the highest credit upon him; and we trust that the Philharmonic Society, under his able direction, may not only prosper itself, but may be the means of inciting other villages and towns in the colony to form similar societies for the cultivation of a sound musical taste.

SYDNEY.—The Lyster Opera Company have continued their performances here with the greatest success; and have received the highest amount of patronage and support. *Faust*, *Masaniello*, *Le Prophète*, and *La Sonnambula* have been produced with the utmost care; and have proved extremely attractive. But the great event of the season has been the production of *Oberon*, which was placed upon the stage, and performed in a manner alike creditable to the artists and director, Mr. W. S. Lyster. Madame Lucy Escott's singing of the grand *scena*, "Ocean, thou mighty monster," is spoken of by the local papers in the strongest terms of commendation. Mr. Henry Squires, as *Sir Huon*, Madame Durand, as *Puck*, and Mr. Armes Beaumont, as *Oberon*, also gave the highest satisfaction in their respective characters; and Miss Emma Neville created quite an effect in the well-known "Mermaid's Song." The opera was conducted by Mr. George Loder with his usual ability. Mr. W. S. Lyster deserves much credit for the liberal manner in which he has placed all his operas upon the stage. Such completeness as he has accustomed the audience to during his management will not only do much towards elevating the taste, but will effectually tend to destroy the pernicious system of operatic "starring."

WAKEFIELD.—On Sunday, the 12th ult., a new Organ was opened in Kirkthorpe Church by Mr. Jarvis, organist of Horbury, when full choral service was performed. The organ was built by Mr. Denman, of York; it is a powerful instrument, and much admired for its full, rich, and mellow tone.

WOOLWICH.—On Friday, the 21st of July, a concert was given at the Town Hall in aid of the fund for the Widow and Orphan of Police Inspector Brine. The performers were Misses Hunter and Magrath; Messrs. Reeves, Atkins, Thomas, and Hammond, accompanied by Mr. G. M. Smith on the harmonium. There was also a solo on the cornet by Mr. Carpenter. The part-songs were given with an expression and accuracy which gave general satisfaction. Horsley's "Spring," a duet by the ladies, and a bass solo by Mr. Hammond were encored.—On Monday, the 21st ult., there was a performance of the *Lay of the Bell* by the members of Mr. Whomes' Choral Society. The concert was most successful, and the exertions of the performers were highly appreciated by a large audience. The soloists were Miss Whomes, Miss Julia Elton, Mr. Montem Smith, and Mr. Patey.

ORGAN APPOINTMENTS.—Mr. Robert Watson (Skipton), to Holy Trinity Church, Burnley, Lancashire.—Mr. J. Bradford, to All Saints, Surrey Square, Newington.—Mr. S. A. Alderson, to the Parish Church, St. Hilda's South Shields.—Mr. Matthew Arnold, (Leeds,) to the Wesleyan Chapel, Ecclehill, near Bradford.—Mr. A. Orlando Steed to the Parish Church, Long Melford, Suffolk.

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